

*The Seamens CASE with respect to their Service in the Navy, wherein divers Hardships which they undergo are truly stated, and humbly presented to the Great Council of the Nation. By John Dennis, Philo Patria.*

**The First GRIEVANCE is QUERIES.**

**T**HE Nature and Effect of those Queries are, That every Man set on Shoar sick, and not returning to his proper Ship or some other in one Month, or immediately after discharg'd from sick Quarters, thereby forfeits his Wages.

*That the same is a Grievance which hope may to be removed. See Address to the Admiralty, Sect. 1. To which shall add,*

1. That many have been set on Shoar in a deplorable Condition, and either died in the Boats, or in the Streets, or as soon as received into Quarters, others set on Shoar where there have not been any Person appointed to take care of them.
2. Many have been Imprest from sick Quarters before recovered, and hurried on board other Ships, and there soon after died; which Practice has not a little increased the Mortality of the Seamen, and by this means their Widows, Families, and Relations have not only lost their Providers, but also their Wages, as well in the Ships from which they were set sick on Shoar, as those wherein they died; not knowing what Ships they were Imprest into.
3. Many have liv'd to return in such Ships whereinto they were Imprest, but not being able to prove they were Imprest, by reason of the Death or Removal of the Officer that Imprest them, notwithstanding their continuance in the Service their Wages have been denied.
4. Those that were set sick a-Shoar, have for the most part been rendered incapable to return to their proper Ships, being deprived of (or not allowed) the Conduct-Money appointed them; and instead thereof have been forced to sell or pawn, not only their Cloaths, (that is such as had any) but also their Wages for their Subsistence before they were recovered or fit to travel.
5. The Seamen having justly and with great difficulty earn'd their Wages, and the Nation granted sutable Funds for the Payment thereof. How constant it is with the Constitution of this Government, the inviolable Laws of the Realm, the credit of His Majesty's Service, or the Encouragement of Seamen, shall humbly submit to the Consideration of the Patrons of our Country.

**The Second GRIEVANCE is R's.**

*And those R's, have of late been strenuously observed, if not improved to the Seaman's Prejudice. The Nature or Effect of those R's as now practised, is, That the Persons who by accident or otherwise, do leave or are left by their proper Ships, are by those R's noted to be Run, and forfeit all the Wages due to them, not only in the Ships they leave, but in all former Ships as far as the same is unpaid, notwithstanding Tickets long before delivered them for their former service; by what new Rules or Orders this is practis'd I cannot say, but am well assur'd 'tis contrary to the former Practice and Rules of the Navy.*

*See Reasons to redress this, Sect. 2. in the Address to the Admiralty. To which shall further add,*

1. That such Wages (had not Money been wanting) would have been paid long before it became forfeited.
2. Those Tickets and the Wages due by the same, have been assigned and transferred to others long before such forfeiture; and as such Debts cannot be released by the Party without consent of the Assignee, so I humbly conceive they cannot be forfeited, even in Cases of Felony, &c. the Right in Equity being in the Assignee and not in the Party.
3. That many have deserted the Nation, and either entered into foreign Service, or turned Pirates: And it may reasonably be feared, that those and other Hardships as they have endured, have not been the least Inducements to it.

**The Third GRIEVANCE is,**

*The deferring or non-payment of the Wages of such as are dead or absent, notwithstanding others have attended with sufficient Power to receive the same, and no colour of Objection, and those to whom it's due ready to perish for want: to such there is several 100000 l. now due and in Arrears, which should have been long since paid.*

As I have no reason to take up any time in asserting the Justice of their Case, to presume I can assign no greater Motive for their speedy Payment, than the poor and distressed condition in which they yet remain, with their loud and clamorous Cries, which have sounded through the whole Nation: and shall only add this, That their Monies being so long since earned, and the Ships for that time also long since paid, many of them have fallen into the Hands of Impatient Creditors, and by them thrown into Prison, to their utter Ruin. And whereas in my *Address to the Admiralty*; 'twas hinted that some Seamen lost 10 or 12 s. per l. by their Tickets: I have since been well assured that many of those that belonged to the Ships laid up at Plymouth, had not above 6 or 7 s. per l. for their Tickets.

**The Fourth GRIEVANCE is, the usual and irregular manner of Payment lately practized, viz.**

*Some Ships that have three or four Years Pay due, have been paid only ten or twelve Months, the latter time, and the former left unpaid upon account of their Companies being turned over into other Ships.*

*2dly 1. Some Ships paid for the whole time, yet many People left unpaid.*

*As Reasons to redress this shall humbly offer,*

1. That such Men as are thus turned over, do seldom exceed one fourth part of the Ship's Company, and not  $\frac{1}{3}$  of those remain in such later Ships till they are paid off, and few or none of those but have their Wives and Relations ready to attend the Payment of the proper Ships, who have taken expensive Journeys for the same; but to their great Disappointment have been denied their wages.
2. Such later Ships have been paid, and the Wages for the former not paid at that time.
3. The Paying of the Wages of some Persons, and leaving others to a Recal when a general Pay is intended, as it is not just so the Consequences thereof have tended to the ruin of many.



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### The Fifth GRIEVANCE is,

*Turning Men over from Ship to Ship, lending them, and bearing them by List, that they know not in what Ship, nor by what means they may obtain their Wages.*

That this is a Hardship is in it self evident, but that it should also be laden with the loss of their Wages, seems very unreasonable.

### The Sixth GRIEVANCE is the Alteration of Officers Qualities.

*By this their Wages have been retrenched, some from 3 l. to 36 s. others from 36 to 23 s. &c.*

*As Reasons why this should not to be practized, shall offer,*

1. That ever person officiating in any Office or Employment, and so rated in the Ships Book, ought to have the Wages allow'd by His Majesty for the same.
2. 'Tis an apparent Discouragement to able and ingenious Seamen to do the Duty, and bear the Burthen of such Employs, and see some Servant or Favourite receive the Wages allowed for the same.
3. Such Persons especially where Tickets are made out have the Testimony of the proper Officers, that they have served (as, and ought to have the Wages due to Persons) in such Stations; and in case there be more Officers born than the rate of the Ships will admit, the Captain and Officers so of them ought to sustain the Loss and indemnify His Majesty; it being intirely in their Breasts to prevent the same.



### The Seventh GRIEVANCE is,

*Non-payment of Powers (or Letters of Attorney) made to Officers; that is, if any Officer's Father, Brother, Relation, or any other Friend hath served in the Navy, and hath made a Letter of Attorney to such Officer to receive the Wages, he is denied payment of the same.*

As for this Order, how good soever the design might be in making the same, to prevent such Frauds as might happen by the irregular bearing, or rating of Seamen for the Officers advantage; yet being unlimited, as well for Time as Circumstance, proves to several a Hardship and Grievance.

*As Reasons to mitigate the same, I shall offer,*

1. That many of those Powers or Letters of Attorney were made long before this Order; and 'tis hard to be punished for breaking a Law before made.
2. That many of those Persons serving were Servants to the said Officers, and whom they might then entertain as such; according to the constant Practice of the Navy.
3. Others have supplied, or actually paid and satisfied the Parties serving, and the Wages due, belongs in right to such Officers, and not to the Parties.
4. The said Order cannot accomplish the end for which designed, by reason such Officers who will be so unjust as to abuse His Majesty's Service, well knows that Powers or Letters of Attorney made to their Servants, or any Fore-mast Men, or other Persons in trust for them, will receive the said Wages, as well as tho the same were made to themselves.

### The Eighth (tho not a positive) GRIEVANCE.

*Yet as Matter worthy Consideration, I shall hint something touching the smallness of the able Seamen's Pay, and would not omit the Gunners, Boatswains, and Carpenters herein.*

*As for the able Seamen's Pay, it is 24 s. per Month, the Deduction from the Registered Seamen's 1 s. and from those that are not Registered 1 s. 6 d. per Month, so that their Pay is but 22 s. and 6 d. The Warrant-Officers before-mentioned, have Pay according to the respective Rates they are in.*

If Encouragement be a proper Means to excite to Valour and Diligence in the performance of Duty, as is the receiv'd Opinion of this Government, evidenced by doubling the Commission, (and some of the Warrant) Officers Pay, with other Encouragements.

And unless the Common Seamen and Warrant-Officers above-mentioned, are by some other Motive so diligent or valourous that they need no such Encouragement, or their Service or Trust so small that they deserve none: It is worthy of Consideration whether they ought not to have an addition to their Pay; especially considering the dearth of Provision, now beyond what it has been in times past.

### The Ninth GRIEVANCE is,

*The Difficulty of obtaining His Majesty's gracious Bounty allowed the Widows and Children of such as are slain in His Majesty's Service, and the Monies due for the Cloaths of such as die; which Cloaths is generally sold at the Mast; such Seamen's Families and Relations being at a distance, and not knowing where to find the proper Officers to sign such Certificates as required for the Payment of such Bounty and Cloath-Money: it hath been long delayed, and often-times intirely lost.*

As this Case is plain, so the Redress for time to come is easy, there needing only an Article to the proper Officers Instruction, that immediately after any such accidents happen, they sign Certificates of the same, and return such Certificates with their Books to the Office.

And for the time past, that such Certificates for Bounty be dispensed with, and Credit given to the Ship's Books which are in the Office, and signed by the proper Signing Officers. And for Cloaths to the Slop-Books delivered into the same Office.

### The Tenth GRIEVANCE is,

*The Non-payment of the Register'd Seamen, (not to insist on the 40 s. per Annum hitherto unpaid) I shall only mention the Case of the Widows, Friends, and Relations of such as have died in the Service, with respect to their Wages.*

1. Such as die on Voyages to Holland, France, the Narrow-Seas, &c. their Wages are refused to be paid according to the Act, it being alledged that such are not Foreign Voyages.
2. Such as have been bound out on Foreign Voyages, and died before the Ships departure from England, their Wages is also refused.
3. Such as have been on Foreign Voyages so accounted, and in such Voyages have contracted Sickness, whereof they have died immediately after the Ships Return to England, their Wages is also refused, as not intended by the said Act to be paid.
4. Such as have gone out in one Ship, and served a considerable time in her, and afterwards turn'd over into another, and there in a few Months died; the Widows of such are paid for the Ships only wherein they died, and not for the former.
5. Such Commission and Warrant-Officers as are Register'd who die on Foreign Voyages, their Wages is refused, as not intended to be paid by the said Act.

How far this is coherent to the intent of the said Act, and whether those Circumstances have not prevented the Act from having its desired effect; I shall not pretend to determine: but it has doubtless more than a little obstructed the same.

For the Redress whereof, shall only alledge the Nations Promise by the established Law, the Peoples Distress, the Justice and Merit of their Cause, and the further and future Encouragement for the Seamen to Register themselves for His Majesty's Service; the which Redress, or some other futeable Remedy that may engage Seamen to their proper Duty for the Nations Defence, I dare not doubt but will be found, if it be taken into the Consideration of this Judicious and August Assembly, the Great Council of the Nation; and that without the great Expence, and irregular Compulsion lately us'd in Impressing, or any-wise infringing Magna Charta, or any other establish'd Law of this Realm.

### The Eleventh GRIEVANCE is,

*The Government and Discipline used in the Navy; but there being already good and wholesome Laws provided, both for suppressing Vice, and encouraging Virtue, I have little to say, only that the Epidemical abounding of Vice and Debauch through the whole Fleet, too evidently demonstrates the Neglect, if not the Contempt of the said Laws: And it would well if the Practice and Examples of the Superiour-Officers did not so much contribute to the same; and whether this (with sordid and slavish Punishment, (viz. Whipping and Flogging,) much us'd of late, and that on fruitless Occasions) do*



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To redress this, there is an absolute necessity of the strict observance of those Instructions given by the Lord High Admiral of England, or Lord Commissioners for executing that Office, and that as well by the Superiour Officers as the meanest Seamen; for whilst the Superiour Officers are guilty of Vice and Debauchery, it cannot be hoped the same should be duly corrected, or effectually suppressed in the Common Seamen.

#### The Twelfth GRIEVANCE is,

The fraudulent Dealing of many that pretend to sollicite Business, and receive Wages in the Navy, by which the Seamen are also prejudiced; but the Particulars hereof being too long to insert herein, shall at present omit the same.